

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-7012

October 2, 2013

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives
H. 232 – U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker:

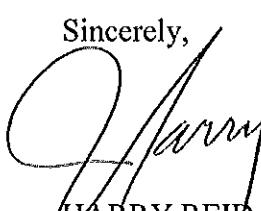
I hated the Iraq war. I think I hated it as much as you hate the Affordable Care Act. Even though I voted in 2002 to give President Bush the authority to confront Saddam Hussein, I became appalled at how that authority was used — without clear objectives, a coherent strategy, or significant international support. There were many gut-wrenching nights when I struggled over what I needed to do to end the carnage. In those days, when President Bush was Commander in Chief, I could have taken the steps that you are taking now to block Government funding in order to gain leverage to end the war. I faced a lot of pressure from my own base to take that action. But I did not do that. I felt that it would have been devastating to America. Therefore, the Government was funded.

Now we find ourselves at loggerheads. There needs to be a path forward to reopen our Government and protect our economy. This is a communication to you offering a sensible, reasonable compromise.

Before the House you have the Senate-passed measure to reopen the Government, funded at the level that the House chose in its own legislation. I propose that you allow this joint resolution to pass, reopening the Government. And I commit to name conferees to a budget conference, as soon as the Government reopens. That conference can discuss the important fiscal issues facing our Nation. You and your Colleagues have repeatedly cited these fiscal issues as the things on which we need to work. This conference would be an appropriate place to have those discussions, where participants could raise whatever proposals — such as tax reform, health care, agriculture, and certainly discretionary spending like veterans, National Parks, and NIH — they felt appropriate.

I hope that we can work together in this fashion. Together, we can end this Government shutdown and work to address the important fiscal issues facing our Nation. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,


HARRY REID
United States Senator